Pneumococcal vaccination in splenectomised cancer patients

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Although pneumococcal vaccination has been recommended in splenectomised patients for more than 30 years, its use remains unsatisfactory. We conducted two consecutive retrospective assessments to determine the rate of pneumococcal vaccination among splenectomised cancer patients at a single institution. We found that 75% (82 of 115) of splenectomised cancer patients had received at least one documented pneumococcal vaccination as compared to only 59.7% of patients identified in a previous assessment conducted 1997. 20% (22 of 115) of the patients had not been vaccinated at all. Splenectomy was performed in 54% because of Hodgkin lymphoma. The pneumococcal vaccination coverage in this subgroup has risen from 40% in the previous assessment (1997) to 93% in the current survey. In conclusion, patients splenectomised at a young age because of Hodgkin lymphoma are the key group at risk for insufficient pneumococcal vaccination. Repeated assessments of the pneumococcal vaccination status increased the rate of vaccination.

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